

**SECRET**

14 JUN 1963

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

**SUBJECT:** Comments on Action Memorandum No. A-255

**REFERENCE:** Action Memorandum No. A-255, dated  
8 June 1963

1. This memorandum is for your information and is in response to paragraph 3 of reference memorandum.

2. At the start of the October 1962 missile crisis all United States civilian aircraft were prohibited from flying in Cuban airspace at the request of the Department of Defense. To the best of our knowledge, CIA did not participate in this decision, although it is likely that the matter was discussed in EXCOMM. On 27 November 1962, the ban on United States civilian flights over Cuba was modified at the initiative of the Department of State, from outright prohibition to a warning in the form of a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) advising against such flights since the continued uncertainty of the Cuban situation risked the safety and property of United States citizens. To our knowledge, CIA was not consulted prior to the publication of this NOTAM. Although the risks had been considered as minimal for some time, the NOTAM remained in effect until 6 June 1963, both as a bargaining point with the Cuban Government for the release of Americans imprisoned in Cuba and as a means of inducing Pan American Airways (PAA) to resume service to Cuba, if so desired. The reasoning behind this position is spelled out in the attached memorandum from the then Coordinator for Cuban Affairs, Mr. Sterling J. Cottrell, to the Secretary of State.

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE

*Action Memo*

A-255

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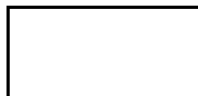
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State Dept. review completed

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3. As a member of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Cuba, under Mr. Cottrell's chairmanship, CIA did participate in discussions which led to the lifting of the NOTAM which, from our standpoint, was incidental to the decision not to resume PAA flights to Havana. This aspect of the problem is also explained in the attached memorandum.



Richard Helms  
Deputy Director (Plans)

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Attachment: (1)  
Memorandum

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This document consists of \_\_\_\_\_ pages  
No. 4 of 11 Copies, Series A

**MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary**

**THROUGH: G - Mr. Johnson**  
**S/S**  
**ARA - Mr. Martin**

**FROM: CCA - Sterling J. Cottrell**

**SUBJECT: Lifting of Notice to Airmen (NOTAM)**  
**Warning Against Flights in Cuban**  
**Airspace and Resumption of Air Service**

Date in error-  
should read  
27 November 62.  
30 January 63  
is date of  
publication  
of NOTAM.

During the October missile crisis all United States civilian aircraft were prohibited from flying in Cuban airspace at the request of the Department of Defense. On January 30, 1963, this prohibition was modified, at the Department's instance, by a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) warning against such flights (Tab A) since their continuance and the uncertainty of the Cuban situation risked the safety and property of United States citizens. Although this risk has probably been minimal for some time, the NOTAM has continued in effect both as a possible bargaining point for effecting the release of the Americans imprisoned in Cuba and as a means of inducing Pan American Airways (PAA) to resume service to Cuba, if so desired. Donovan, with our authorization, informed Castro that the NOTAM would probably be lifted if the Americans were released. Donovan made no commitment regarding resumption of air service to Cuba.

PAA maintains that the NOTAM results in a \$7,000 daily loss due to its inability to overfly Cuba. Braniff experiences a smaller daily loss. Both urge lifting the NOTAM. Foreign airlines overfly Cuba without incident.

Relating to the question of lifting the NOTAM are the Department's plans, virtually completed in collaboration with DOD, FAA and Treasury, to recommend a

Attachment

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NOTAM requiring Cuban non-scheduled aircraft that overfly the United States (usually to Canada) to land in the United States for inspection. The Cuban Government may counter with a parallel NOTAM similarly affecting non-scheduled overflights of Cuba by United States civil aircraft. In this event, lifting the current NOTAM would have practical effect only for scheduled overflights of Cuba by United States civil aircraft.

With respect to resumption of flights to Cuba, PAA is prepared to abide by United States ~~Security~~ policy in this regard. In the absence of United States instructions and with the lifting of the NOTAM, PAA has indicated it would on its own resume service (seven to ten flights a week) on humanitarian grounds and as long as lucrative freight to Cuba in the form of packages from Cuban exiles and others continued.

From the United States standpoint the following advantages and disadvantages would derive from resumption of flights:

Advantages

- (1) A steady source of current intelligence from refugees would become available.
- (2) Humanitarian and propaganda advantages would be derived by providing an opportunity to leave.

Disadvantages

- (1) The effectiveness of our policy of isolation would be weakened.
- (2) Other airlines, such as KLM and Mexicana, would be encouraged to resume service to Cuba, thus facilitating travel of Latin Americans and others to Cuba for training in subversion.

(3)

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- (3) The Castro regime would derive dollar exchange (before the October crisis the regime obtained some \$2,000,000 annually from PAA flights).
- (4) The tense situation in Miami due to the large number of refugees would be aggravated and would require opening a second refugee center at considerable expense.
- (5) The Castro regime would continue to rid Cuba of discontented elements.

We believe that overriding considerations are those of pursuing our policy of isolation and of hindering the travel of subversives and potential subversives to and from Cuba. At present the inflow of refugees is continuing through the return voyages of the American Red Cross supply vessels. When these cease (early June) and should we determine that inflow of Cuban refugees would be desirable, the feasibility of ship transport could be explored.

Recommendations

1. That you authorize lifting the current NOTAM in terms that would take into account any Cuban reaction to the imposition of the NOTAM requiring Cuban non-scheduled aircraft overflying the United States to land for inspection.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

2. That you authorize that PAA be informed that resumption of service to Cuba would not be in the national interest at this time.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Concurrences :

SECRET

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**Concurrence:**

State: INR - Mr. Plank AV - Mr. Styles SCA - Mr. Schwartz  
CCA - Mr. Follestad.

Justice - Mr. Geoghegan CIA - Mr. Helms  
DOD - Secretary Vance

**Attachment:**

Tab A - Notice to Airmen  
(NOTAM)

ARA:RAHurwitch:dr 5/2/63

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**SPECIAL NOTICE**

Elements of uncertainty exist within the Havana  
FIR that could present hazards to flight operations.  
U.S. civil aircraft are advised to avoid this area.

From International NOTAMS, January 30, 1963

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DCI briefed.

Welder

24 June 1963

Walt:

Back on 8 June, DCI telephoned DDCI re the lifting of the NOTAM for flights over Cuba and DDCI issued an Action memo to DDP and DDI, asking DDP whether we had been consulted in

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a member of the Cottrell Committee, did participate in discussions which lead to the lifting of the NOTAM. (Though the risk to American carriers had been minimal for some time, the NOTAM had remained in effect as a bargaining point during negotiations for release of the American prisoners and as a means of inducing Pan Am to resume service to Cuba -- Pan Am claimed it had been losing \$7,000 a day by having to detour around Cuba.)

desirable to move ahead on this now, particularly since priority targets are not located in the air corridors into and out of Havana.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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DCI generated  
this by phone call  
to me — please  
brief him —

  
6/22/83

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TO	NAME AND ADDRESS		DATE	INITIALS	
1	Exec Dir		2 June	LBK	
2	DDCI		4/21	[Signature]	
3	in file				
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5					
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ACTION		DIRECT REPLY		PREPARE REPLY	
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COMMENT		FILE		RETURN	
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# ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM:

Deputy Director (Plans)

EXTENSION

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TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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1. ~~Executive Director~~  
Deputy Director of  
Central Intelligence  
7D 6011 Hdqs

14 June

6/22

MSC/b/p

(retained cc)

2. EA/DCI

7-1-63

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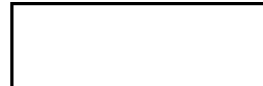
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Pls see. That  
DCI is briefed-

AK  
6/22/63